

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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SERMON.

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'And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.' Rom. xv, 29.

The apostle Paul possessed many distinguishing traits of character, that bespeak a greatness of soul, and a noble, magnanimous, temperamental mind. Naturally bold, fearless, energetic, and uncompromising; and actuated by sensitive feelings, sympathetic affections, and sentiments of honor, integrity, and virtue, he was constitutionally calculated to espouse any cause in which he should enlist himself, with ardent solicitude; and to prosecute an enterprise with steadiness of purpose—indefatigable assiduity, and faithful perseverance—regarding principle as paramount to all other considerations; he was vigorous, vehement, and zealous; but not passionately enthusiastic, or visionary—governed by an internal principle of righteousness, nothing could tempt him to abandon what he conscientiously embraced and upheld. Having been brought up under the tuition of Gamaliel, a Doctor of the law, he was made familiarly acquainted with the Mosaic Institution, with all its rituals and ordinances: and with all the native fervor of his soul, he espoused the religion of his fathers, and formed the determined resolution of maintaining at all hazards, the principles of Judaism against the attack of every foe. Accordingly, when the religion of Jesus began to make rapid advances, and threaten in some degree the subversion of existing Institutions and doctrines, Paul was found at the head of its persecutors and bitter opposers. But on being arrested in his wild and mad career by a sudden and miraculous conversion to the *system of Grace* he so diligently labored to destroy, he redoubled his energies in promoting the religion of Jesus, and strove as faithfully and sedulously to plant the standard of Christianity on the battlements of its adversaries, as he had previously done in sustaining the doctrines of Judaism.

Being warmed with the holy influences of the Gospel, and animated with the joyful hopes its promises inspire, nothing could make him relax his diligence in proclaiming 'the love of God that passeth all understanding,' or induce him to cease his labor in the great work of reconciling grace. 'Neither did he count his life dear unto him, if he could but finish his course with joy, and the ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus.' All the pleasures that earth could afford, he esteemed but dross, when compared with the rich fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ: and all the afflictions, sorrows, disappointments, and troubles, flesh is heir to, he considered as gain, could he but win the Lord Jesus: 'for he looked not at things temporal; but at things spiritual, eternal in the heavens.' Consequently the threats and frowns of potent adversaries, the loss of friends and friendship—the sacrifice of interest, reputation, and honor—nay, bonds, imprisonment, stripes, famine, perils, and sword, could not move him, or prevent his 'declaring the whole counsels of God.' 'He both willingly labored and suffered reproach, because he trusted in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe; and hence he come off more than

conqueror through him that loved him. Accordingly while at the Imperial Court of Rome, (having been arraigned before the august tribunal of Cæsar at the great Metropolis, to answer to certain charges there preferred against him by his enemies,) regardless of consequences, he constantly preached the kingdom of God, and the resurrection of the dead. During his confinement in Italy, many were induced to become votaries of the Cross; and to receive Jesus as the Author and Captain of their Salvation.

But the religion of Jesus Christ, comprising a sublime system of doctrine and ethics, like every other science must be developed and learned by degrees. It is impossible in the very nature of things, for man to come suddenly into the full possession of a correct knowledge of all the sublime mysteries which the gospel unfolds to view. The mind of man is progressive, and his attainments in knowledge are secured by slow and gradual advances. True he has powers and faculties which render him susceptible of improvement—a genius, by which he may ascend to the towering heights of intellectual achievement and moral excellence. But though thus nobly gifted; and by the laws and principles of mind closely allied to God and angels, yet the road which leads to the temple of knowledge, is both steep and difficult of ascension—and obstructed with numerous impediments not easily surmounted. Every art and science, and every system of morals, metaphysics, and religion, is based on certain fundamental principles or municipal laws, which are discoverable through all the various modifications, bearings, and relations pertaining thereto: and he, who would acquaint himself therewith, must begin with simples; or with the first rudiments; and then make advances, as time, circumstances, and capacity will allow. It is not for man to discover the nature and fitness of things by intuitive perception—this belongs to God alone. He must think, reason, reflect, compare, abstract, combine, examine. Application and study are prerequisites to the attainment of wisdom. Aware of these facts, the Apostles and first Ministers of Jesus introduced to the attention of their countrymen the gospel of the blessed God, by making proclamation of LIFE and IMMORTALITY revealed by the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Preaching 'Jesus Christ and him crucified,' constituted the essence of the first apostolic ministrations. The fact, that Jesus was the long expected and promised Messiah, was all that was necessary to prove, in order to secure friends to his cause. Hence this became 'the pillar and the ground of truth'—after laying this corner stone, the Heralds of the Cross could proceed to develop the system of redeeming grace; and so far as the Christian converts were capable of understanding the heavenly and sublime principles of the gospel, to disclose the whole scheme of salvation and pardoning love, which Jesus came to communicate to a dying world. Accordingly when the news of a risen Savior had been proclaimed in all the land, and churches had been organized in various places in the name of Jesus, the Apostles both by their oral communications and written Epistles, gave in detail a full exhibition of the whole counsel of God, that the Chris-

tian community 'might grow in grace and the knowledge of the Son of God, till they all come in the unity of the faith unto a perfect man—the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

The church at Rome had been gathered by the apostle Paul, during his sojourn at the Royal City; and as they had been brought into the glorious light of the gospel through his instrumentality, they were endeared to him by many sacred ties. And feeling a lively interest in their prosperity and future welfare, he addressed them a letter fraught with sage instructions concerning the gospel Institution, and designed to acquaint them more perfectly with the doctrine of their blessed Lord, in which he pathetically portrays his regard for them, and his anxiety to mingle once more in their Society, that he might enrich their minds with the knowledge of salvation, and comfort them with the hopes and promises of the gospel. Having purposed by the permission of Providence to visit them again, for the purpose of strengthening their hands and encouraging their hearts in that best of all causes, the cause of humanity, of Christ, and of God, he reveals his intentions of so doing, and observes in rapturous ecstasy, 'I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.'

In prosecuting my remarks on this subject I shall consider,

1st. What is the Gospel of Christ?

2nd. What constitutes the fulness of its blessings?

I. GOSPEL is a Saxon word, and signifies God's—spell; or the period when with the principles of his righteousness, he doth rule and reign, governing the nations, and controlling the affections of the heart; and is of the same import, as the Latin *Evangelium* and the Greek *Euangeliion*, signifying good news, glad tidings, interesting intelligence. The object, end, and design of the Gospel is, therefore, to communicate pleasurable sensations. Consequently the advent of the Son of God, who was commissioned as special Envoy from the court of Heaven, to bear the glorious message of *gospel grace* to a desponding and sin-sick world, was a circumstance in the history of events, momentous indeed to the human race. When the happy and ever memorable Era came, that gave birth to the Lord's anointed, the morning stars sang together, and the children of God shouted for joy—the day was ushered in with gladness, and hailed with the most lively demonstrations of heavenly mirth and heartfelt satisfaction. Gabriel plumed his golden wings, and descended to our earth, to announce the gladsome news of a Redeemer born, and as he transportingly exclaimed to the Shepherds of Bethlehem, 'Lo! I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people,' the heavenly host that followed him in train hovered round the lower skies, and with symphonic voices, and aerial Lyres attuned to softest melody, chanted in holy concert to the Evening air, the beautiful and sublime anthem, 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will to men.' From which it appears evident, that the doctrines of the Gospel contain 'tidings of peace' to the world, in which the whole family of man are deeply concerned. Jesus himself in speak-

ing of the purposes of his mission observed, 'To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the TRUTH. I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE; and every one that is of the TRUTH heareth my voice.'

TRUTH is the opposite of *fiction* and *falsehood*, and is applied to propositions which concord with the reality of things. A *truth* requiring the assent of the understanding must exist independent of such assent—else the proposition could not be *truth* till it had obtained the ingredient constituting it such. Hence truth is not dependant on *belief* or *unbelief* for its existence. *Belief* is but the assent of the mind to a proposition recognized in the understanding. *Unbelief* but the withholding of this assent; neither of which can have any effect to change the nature of things; either to make one hair white or black. Our *belief* or *unbelief* cannot destroy the attributes or fixed purposes of Jehovah, or effect in the least degree the established laws of nature. *Faith* or *belief* is produced by acknowledged evidence of *fact*: and in the absence of such testimony the mind must remain in a state of *unbelief*. But though the mind doth receive no satisfactory assurance of the correctness of a proposition *true in itself*, yet it is as much *truth*, nevertheless, as though the assent of the mind had been obtained. A Mussulman might present a person the Alcoran, alleging it contained the revelation of God, and disclosed the destinies of our race—and the individual be led to believe the statement, acknowledging Mahomet a Prophet. But granting such an assent, it by no means establishes the validity of the declaration. Again, a person may assert the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and we may not have sufficient evidence of the fact, to convince our understanding of the truth of the declaration; but our scepticism will by no means falsify the correctness of the assertion. It is either *true* or *untrue* irrespective of belief. Hence it is obvious, that *faith* is so disconnected from the inherent properties of *truth*, it can have no affinity or relation thereto that shall effect its own proper nature. St. John has made a very pertinent remark in this particular, *to wit*, 'This is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son, he that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.' Now providing the *truth* of a proposition depended on belief, how could we make God a liar by denying that in Christ we have eternal life; seeing, that so long as we remain in a state of *unbelief*, we have not this life secured to us? It requires no great depth of discernment to perceive, that if the *unbeliever* have not eternal life in Christ, he cannot make God a liar, or impeach his veracity by denying it, unless he hath given him a record that is *untrue*: For if a person have not, and never will have *eternal life*, he cannot be made to believe that he has, without believing a falsehood. From which it follows that if he who denies that in Christ he has eternal life, treats God as a liar, it is evident the inheritance of *life eternal* is secured irrespective of *faith*:—And we are required to believe the RECORD, because it is a *record of fact*, in which we are deeply interested, established in the unalterable decrees of Jehovah.

All things in nature exist on the principle of cause and effect, and though effects themselves become the proximate causes of subsequent effects, yet they owe their origin to antecedent CAUSES, and I cordially admit, that *faith* stands in some degree connected with human operations. Man is moved to action by motives, and motives are produced by impressions received. The husbandman commits his seed to the soil expecting an increase to crown his labor with an

abundant reward. It is this anticipation, connected with his wants and necessities, that induces him to cultivate the earth. But had he *no faith*, that the grain sown, would germinate, spring forth, and produce a harvest, he would withhold his hand, and consequently beg instead of reap. It is true the faith of the husbandman does not make a barren soil prolific, nor change the common providence of God: But as the cultivation of the earth, and the commission of the seed thereto, are prerequisites to the securing of a harvest, it is obvious that *faith* becomes a proximate cause of the production arising from the effects of labor. Abraham believed God, and he willingly obeyed his command, in the free and voluntary offering of his Son, whom he would have withheld, had he not trusted in him. Hence *faith* is requisite to the performance of many things, and the existence of others. The agriculturalist is not obliged to believe, that the earth will yield her increase, in order to secure a harvest—let the proper means be adopted for bringing to pass the ends desired, and his infidelity will not blight the germ, or wither the fruit. Therefore it is a matter clear to a mathematical demonstration, that man is not obliged to believe ought that did not exist prior to the exercise of such *belief*, in order to make something that would not otherwise have been: But on the contrary he is under the necessity of believing what is *true in itself*, in order to act as the proximate cause of something desired, or required.

When means are requisite to the accomplishment of certain ends—the *ends* cannot be certain, unless the means are sure—and are we assured of a bounteous harvest, we are certain that the seed will be previously sown. And I would not here deny that if *eternal life* in Christ be secured by the works of the creature, which require a pre-existing faith, in order to their execution; then, unless such *faith* be exercised, the *eternal life* would never be enjoyed. Therefore, if it be a matter of fact, that we have *eternal life* in Christ, and this *life* is to be obtained through the medium of human operations, then, it is clearly established, that the prerequisite means for securing it, *will exist*. On the contrary, providing *eternal life* is the gift of God, and not the product of works, lest any man should boast, then, the certainty of its being dispensed and enjoyed, depends only on the *faithfulness of God*, which is sure and steadfast.

As the certainty of one event cannot be established, till all the intermediate causes necessary to bring it to pass are unequivocally sure to exist; so, inasmuch as Jesus was commissioned to bear witness to the *truth*, his communications must contain a *matter of fact*, not depending on precarious conditions, or suspended on doubtful contingences. And his testimony being the word of absolute *truth*, our *belief* or *unbelief* will not vary their validity in the least particular. Prior to the advent of Christ the whole world, with very few exceptions, was buried in superstitious ignorance—destitute of the knowledge of the true God, and of the nature of his moral government. The Pagan nations of the earth, in conformity to their predilections in favor of religion, had their temples of worship, their forms of devotion, their statue divinities, and their sacrificial altars. Nevertheless, though the invisible things of Jehovah were clearly exhibited in His stately goings, and in the stupendous miracles of his wonder working hands, yet they remained ignorant of his real character and Divine essence: 'and professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images made like corruptible men, and four footed beasts, and creeping things.' In the renowned City of Athens, long celebrated for the learning and wisdom of its inhabitants, there was a Temple dedicated to the worship of 'the

unknown God'; and all the modes of worship and religious rites of the Heathen bear the impress of base idolatry, and clearly evince the most profound ignorance of that Being, they ought to have adored. And notwithstanding the Jews had been favored with a revelation from God, setting forth his character and perfections, yet from their intercourse with surrounding nations—from the exclusive character of their Theocracy and the peculiarities pertaining unto the letter of their religion, and forms of worship, they imbibed very erroneous conceptions, concerning both the nature, will, purposes and attributes of Jehovah; and of the service required at their hands. Saith Jesus, 'no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. The words that I speak unto you, they are *spirit*, and they are *life*: and this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'

It was therefore the first grand object of Christ in his Mission to the world, to acquaint mankind with the true character of God, that therefore those who worshipped him, might worship him in spirit and in truth. In developing the wisdom, power, and goodness of Creation's God, he called to his aid the teachings of nature and Providence. Behold, saith he, 'the fowls of the air, they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; and consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these'—nay your Heavenly Father in the impartial dispensation of his blessing, 'maketh the Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just, and on the unjust.' But he did not confine his instructions to this source of information. After showing that the Omniscient wisdom, Almighty power, and boundless benevolence of God were strikingly displayed in the mechanism of revolving worlds—in the golden beams of the bright and burnished Sun, in the paler light of Evening's gentle Queen, in the Star bestudded canopy of Heaven's azure dome, in the change of the season—in the luxuriance of the earth—and in the providential care of guardian Love, he opens to the astonished gaze of intelligent beings, the most potent exhibitions of his matchless goodness, in the revelation of the Covenant of GRACE. This economy is transcendent in excellence. It delineates in living capitals the *Paternity* of Jehovah, and shows his unparalleled love for his offspring. It teaches us to recognize in Him, a FATHER, who is kind to the unthankful and the evil, watching over them for good; and who will never forsake them—and discloses to our enraptured understandings, the welcome news of pardoning mercy and the knowledge of salvation from sin and death, dispensed through the medium of a crucified Redeemer. It reveals the heavenly intelligence, that 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life—that he commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us—that God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved—Herein then is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. As the Father hath life in himself, even so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, that as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so might the Son quicken whomsoever he would: For the Father commissioned him to execute his will, which consisted in granting eternal life to all flesh. The bequest of the Son of the Most High, as a covenant to the people—a light to the Gentiles, and a salvation to the world, is therefore, Hea-

ven's best gift—the unspeakable gift of God:—It involves beauties and excellencies transcending the perceptions and comprehension of man, and will serve as a theme for angels to hymn in holy wonder, forever and ever. Under this covenant, Jesus appears, as the harbinger of peace, waving the flag of gospel grace, and beckoning the weary sons of humanity, to the blissful regions of everlasting felicity and repose, to smile in immortal youth and bloom in fadeless glory. This constitutes the *blessing* of the gospel, and is that dispensation of TRUTH, which brings life and immortality to light through the resurrection of the dead; at once throwing a blissful halo around the dark night of the grave, and lighting up the visions of hope in the countenance of despair. This *blessing* is a spiritual blessing, calculated to give to life its sweetest charm, and add a double relish to all our joys.

Having ascertained that the blessings the gospel reveals, consists in a salvation from sin and ignorance, and a resurrection to immortal life and glory beyond the tomb, we are led to inquire,

II. What is the extent—the fulness of this *blessing*—who has an inheritance therein—for whom was it designed—for whom prepared?

In ordaining the apostles to proclaim the joyful tidings of salvation to a dying world, Jesus commanded them to preach the gospel to every creature. From which we infer, and reasonably infer, that ALL had an interest in the intelligence it contained—ALL were heirs of the blessing proffered: For, to call those to inherit the promises, and to partake of the riches of grace, for whom they were never prepared, and who could never enjoy them, would be but the height of absurdity; nay it would be but solemn mockery, tantalizing them with offered favors they were never to participate. It will not answer to say, all were heirs on the condition of their believing the proclamation: For I have before proved, that a *thing* to be believed must exist prior to the exercise of *faith*—FAITH does not possess a creative genius, it can only embrace what is already created. Thus, in order to believe the record God gave of his Son, we must have the evidence, it contains a *matter of fact*—satisfied of this, we can but believe. And whatever is a *matter of fact*, is true, whether believed or disbelieved, and our acknowledging a proposition true, is only crediting the testimony received; by no means making it any more true, than before the assent was given.

AGAIN, God has been impartial in all his ways, relative to creation and Providence; and shall he not be equally so, in the dispensations of his grace. "He is of one mind, who can turn him. He is God, and changeth not—all his ways are judgments, just and right is he." Accordingly the scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before (or pre-announced) the gospel to Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed."—Gal. iii. 8. Thus the rich fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, reaches to all the families of the earth; to them that are afar off, even on the isles of the sea. That the blessings of the gospel are to ALL, as well as upon ALL them that believe, is proven,

1st. By its being the will of God that ALL should enjoy salvation by grace; and his will cannot be frustrated. God gave all things into the hands of his Son, and sent him into the world to fulfil his pleasure, and this was his will, viz: "that of all he had given him, he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. And "he will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; for he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou?"—1 Tim. ii. 4. Dan. v. 35.

2d. By God's sending his Son to be the Savior of the world.—"God sent not his Son to judge or condemn the world, but to save it."—John iii. 17 and xii. 47. "And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son, to be the Savior of the world."—1 John iv. 14.

3d. By Jesus having made one universal atonement.—"There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time. Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death; and was crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—Paul.

4th. By its being the pleasure and purpose of God that ALL should be reconciled to Him, and be gathered together in one body in Christ.—"It pleased the Father that in his Son should all fulness dwell, and by him (having made peace through the blood of his cross) to reconcile all things to himself; by him I say, whether they be things in heaven or things in earth. God hath made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."—Col. i. 2. Eph. i. 9, 10.

5th. By the means employed being efficient in accomplishing the desired end.—"As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing, whereto I sent it." Saith Christ, in his address to the Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Therefore "God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure." Nay, "All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away, for Jesus shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Isai. lv. 10, 21. John vii. 4. Ps. xxii. 27. Isai. xxxv. 10, and liii. 11.

The fulness of the gospel of Christ, therefore, proves to be a sufficiency to answer the spiritual desires of all intelligent beings. Like the benevolence of its divine Author, it is high as heaven, deep as the earth, broad as the Universe, and lasting as eternity. "Come then, all ye that are weary and are heavy laden, take the yoke of Christ upon you; for he is meek and lowly, and you will find rest to your souls, come ye to the waters of life freely, come buy wine and buy milk without money and without price. Let him that is a thirsty come, the bride and the lamb say come, and whosoever will come, let him come, and partake of the waters of life freely."

In addition to these joyful tidings which the gospel of Christ presents to fallen man, as the rich fulness of its heavenly treasures, it contains a code of morals, the most pure, the most substantial, the most godly, the most befitting rational beings, of any ever systematized, or recognized by man. Laying down the character of God as the criterion of moral conduct, Jesus proceeds to show, that as Jehovah was impartially good to ALL, exercising his tender mercies over all the works of his hands, it is our reasonable duty, to so far assimilate to the likeness of his moral image, as to love the whole human race, and to use our exertions in the sacred cause of humanity and philanthropy—to ameliorate their condition, and aid, comfort, bless, and happily them. "Whatsoever ye would that

men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for this is the law and the prophets."

As God does not require ought at our hands as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to ALL life, and breath, and all things to enjoy, he makes our duty simple and easy to be performed. Instead of the dumb formalities of Pagan rites and the outward worship of Jewish ceremonies and ordinances, he would have the world adore Him for his greatness, love him for his goodness, thank him for his benefactions, praise him for his mercies, serve him for his worthiness, and pray to him as the author of every blessing. This worship should be the voluntary offering of the heart: for spiritual worship is what he demands. All that the gospel requires of man is, to love God supremely, and mankind universally. "Love is the fulfilling of the law; and obedience is better than sacrifice. The Lord hath shown thee, O man, what is good, and what more doth the Lord thy God require of thee than to deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" And the numerous inducements presented in the gospel of Jesus for leading mankind to the practice of virtue, and to an observance of the divine commands, are wisely calculated to reconcile the world to the Divine administration, and render the children of God, the loyal subjects of his most holy law. The ministry of the New Testament is the ministry of reconciliation. And the covenant of grace brings salvation to all men, "teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present evil world." Let our hearts then offer ascriptions of praise, and our souls be filled with grateful joy, as we contemplate the love of our heavenly Father, in granting the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ to a dying world.—*Religious Inquirer*.

Original.

REPENTANCE.

We sometimes hear it objected to the doctrine of Universal Restoration, that its advocates "deny the doctrine of repentance," or in other words "a change of heart, the new birth," (in the vernacular tongue "getting religion.")

"Any body can be a Universalist," it is said. "You will not be questioned on application for membership in their church as to your religious experience or whether you have obtained a hope;" to which I may add, you will not be asked as to the time, modus operandi and place of your "conviction and conversion."

It is not uncommon for us to hear such remarks as the foregoing, from persons who account themselves the "salt of the earth," whose faith, hopes, and affections seem to be confined,

"To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside."

Though your humble correspondent is far from being an adept in theological technicalities, and although he must acknowledge his deficiency in clerical lore, still he trusts he may without egotism assert, that he has a good share of plain old-fashioned frankness: and if his ideas respecting Universalism are worthy a place in your valuable paper; if he can assist to "plead the cause of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians," you are welcome to his sentiments and services.

Now to the charge, "Universalist deny the doctrine of repentance;" what is repentance? I shall be told by my limitarian brethren, that "there is a repentance which arises from the fear or dread of impending and certain punishment and this may exist where regeneration is wanting, where there is no saving repentance. An individual may exercise this kind of re-

penance and still be in *love with sin*: but there is *Evangelical Repentance*, which he defines to be a work wrought in the soul by God's grace whereby the sinner is made sensible of the enormity of his sins, is grieved and humbled before God on account of them, *not so much for the punishment* due to his sins as that thereby God is offended and dishonored; his law is broken: this grief causes the sinner to turn from his wicked ways; it is attended by a love to God and holiness, a hatred of sin, and a determination to do righteously."

This last kind is the genuine and "saving repentance," which our Presbyterian and other limitarian brethren I presume, wish us to have. The first is good for nothing say they, for Judas repented, but his repentance arose from a fear of condign punishment, not from a love to God or an aversion to sin.

I ask, if a repentance which is identified with a fear of approaching punishment is *spurious*; why is this fear addressed by modern preachers? They tell us that Judas had not the *true* repentance. His was the fear of the awful fate that awaited him; yet it must be confessed that they endeavor by their preaching to awaken in their hearers this same kind of remorse which they are pleased to call a repentance *not unto salvation*. The most imposing imagery, the most forcible strain of oratorical gesticulation, and the most vivid descriptions of the agonies of "the second death," are resorted to to excite in the mind that species of repentance which is deprecated as "*false, which is not accompanied by love and faith, which is not saving.*"

It must be evident to every candid mind that there is an inconsistency here: the sinner is threatened with endless woe if he does not exercise "evangelical repentance"—he must not have that "repentance which springs from a FEAR of the awful punishment denounced against sin, for there is no hatred of sin attending it," yet every species of invention is adopted to create this very counterfeit repentance.

Now let us turn to "evangelical repentance, or that saving grace wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, whereby the sinner is made sensible of his sin." I am not disposed to object to this definition, but I may disagree with my limitarian friend as to the *manner* in which repentance is communicated and the requisite means to produce it in the soul. I conceive repentance to be a *knowledge* or consciousness that we have done wrong, which knowledge recognizes the consequences of the wrong as well as a resolution to do so no more. I do not imagine that this knowledge is bestowed by the Deity in some miraculous supernatural manner. The sinner is made to perceive that "vice produces misery and goodness has its reward," but *how*? Why he has found out this solemn truth, by reflection, by reading, perhaps by *sad experience* (this keeps a dear school) "that there is no peace to the wicked," that "the righteous are recompensed in the earth much more the wicked and the sinner"—he has found "joy unspeakable and full of glory" in believing the blessed gospel of peace and in practising its requirements. He has discovered that his wicked course was leading him (not down the steep of the turbid abyss of hell) but to shame and misery here.

You may call this the work of "God's Spirit" if you please, for it is the influence of *Truth* on his heart, and "God is truth." And here a question of no small moment occurs intimately connected with our subject: Does repentance *precede* or *follow* love? It is contended that "the sinner must be convicted of his exposure to endless pain, he must see himself condemned, and he must hate sin before he can love God and his neighbor," but *love* first breaks down the obdurate sinner's heart, then follows a "godly sorrow for sin not to be repented of."

What can convince the drunkard that he is

hurrying himself to the vortex of infamy or the cold embrace of the grave, but *love*, christian, heaven-born love? What can write on the heart the sacred truth "go and sin no more," but this divine renovating principle? Who will not exercise unfeigned, and ingenuous repentance when the "love of God is shed abroad in his heart?"

Hence we have an argument in favor of the method which Universalist preachers adopt to cause their hearers to repent of their sins and turn to God, and it is corroborated by His truth, "the goodness of God leadeth to repentance." By consulting the second chapter of Acts we shall find what sort of preaching is calculated to produce evangelical repentance. "No angry God in flaming vengeance dressed" is there revealed, no "Lamb of God who will roar against the wicked at the day of judgment," no gloomy, undying misery does Peter declare on the great day of Pentecost to arouse his hearers to repentance; but having been instructed by him who is "the resurrection and the life," even the "life of the world," he delivered a messenger of *love*.

He told them of a Savior, whom though "harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," they had wickedly slain, but God had raised him from the dead. "They were pricked in their heart, and inquired what they should do;" though strange to tell Peter said not a word about the wrath of God which (to use the language of a modern popular divine) is "to press out the sweat of damnation's agony" in "the world of woe."

We wish to be understood by our brethren who charge us with denying the doctrine of Repentance, that we discover a wide difference between *true repentance* and a fear of "endless misery." The latter may exist in all its appalling characteristics, driving its subjects to madness and suicide (which alas has too often been the case) while there is not one spark of the former—We do believe in the doctrine of Repentance—it is taught in the "everlasting gospel," it dropped from the lips of our blessed Lord, "repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

We do not understand by this "kingdom of heaven" the unceasing anger of Jehovah, or that it conveys the idea of endless woe. John also preached these same words, exhorting to repentance, not because there was danger of "ceaseless torments," but because the peace and joy, and blessed hopes, and fruits of the mediatorial reign were to gladden and replenish the earth, and shine with "beam effulgent" in hearts where "gross darkness" ruled triumphant.

Let our popular and learned divines follow the example of Christ, of John, of Peter and Paul in their ministrations, and the effect will be as it was when they proclaimed "the glad tidings of great joy." Repentance and the other Christian graces will shine forth "clear as the sun," and the anti-christian, chilling dogma of endless misery, will be lost in the noon-tide blaze of *truth*, and immured in the recesses of gloom from which it was dragged to terrify mankind.

B. B. H.

Original

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATION.—NO. II.

And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. John ii, 6.

The Jews were required by their law to perform various and frequent ablutions and purifications; and so sacred was this law held, that nothing could ever induce them to sit down to meat without having first washed their hands. When they had been to market, or in the street, so fearful were they of having been polluted by a contact with any person or any thing, they were careful, with the most scrupulous exact-

ness, to wash their hands and arms, and some suppose even their whole bodies. The Evangelist Mark, in allusion to this fact, says, "For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands off, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not," (Mark vii, 3, 4.) At their feasts also servants were in readiness to remove the sandals and wash the feet of guests as soon as they arrived. This to us appears a singular service to render, but the manner of dressing the feet among Oriental nations renders it a necessary one. As it is still the custom in the East, the Jews wore no stockings. "Their sandals or shoes were merely soles of hide, leather, or wood, fastened to the bottom of the foot, by two straps, one of which passed around the great toe on the forepart of the foot, and the other around the ankle." (Calmet's Dic. Bib. art. Sandals.) Dressed in this manner their feet became very dusty and soiled in travelling. Hence the custom of washing their feet when they entered a house and sitting without their sandals. The "six water-pots of stone filled with water," were probably placed for the purpose of cleansing the body, as well as for washing the cups and other vessel used at their feasts, because they were set "after the manner of purifying among the Jews."

Some remains of these ancient customs are still discoverable in the Holy Land. Dr. E. D. Clarke, in his travels in this country, made an interesting discovery while on a visit to the ancient village of Cana. "The ruins of a church are shown in this place, which is said to have been erected over the spot where the marriage-feast of Cana was held. It is worthy of note, that, walking among the ruins, we saw large massy stone water-pots answering the description given of the ancient vessels of the country; not preserved, nor exhibited as relics, but lying around, disregarded by the present inhabitants, as antiquities with whose original use they were unacquainted. From their appearance, and the number of them, it was quite evident that a practice of keeping water in large stone pots, each holding from eighteen to twenty gallons, was once common in the country."—(Clarke's Travels in Egypt, Greece and the Holy Land, p. 226.)

"While Mr. W. Rae Wilson (who visited Palestine in 1819) was at Cana, 'six women, having their faces veiled, came down to the well, each carrying on her head a pot for the purpose of being filled with water. These vessels were formed of stone, and something in the shape of bottles used in our country for containing vitriol, having great bodies and small necks, with this exception, they were not so large; many had handles attached to the sides; and it was a wonderful coincidence with Scripture, that the vessels appeared to contain much the same quantity as those, which the Evangelist informs us had been employed on occasion of the nuptial celebration,' viz. 'three firkins,' that is, about twelve gallons each.' (Wilson's Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land, p. 339) Horne's Introduction, vol. iii. p. 326, Philad. ed.

In relation to the well above-mentioned by Mr. Wilson, Dr. E. D. Clarke, remarks, "About a quarter of a mile before we entered the village, (Cana) is a spring of delicious limpid water, close to the road, whence all the water is taken for the supply of the village. Pilgrims of course halt at this spring as the source of the water which our Savior, by his first miracle, converted into wine." (Clarke's Trav. p. 225.)

These circumstances will call to mind the story of the woman of Samaria who came to Jacob's well, where Jesus sat weary with his journey, to draw water. After Jesus conversed with her awhile, it is said, "The woman then left her water-pot and went into the city," &c.

C. M. S.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK,
AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1832.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

Subject for Sunday evening (to-morrow,) Dec. 9, Examination of the doctrine of Original Sin and total Depravity. Text Gen. vi. 5.

PUBLIC MEETING.

The general meeting of UNIVERSALISTS, in the city of New-York, which was to have taken place at the Orchard-st. Church on Monday evening last was postponed to Monday evening next, December 10th, in consequence of the inclemency of the weather. It will take place on Monday evening next, December 10th, at half-past six, in the Lecture Room, basement story, of the above Church. It is earnestly desired that every one interested in the cause of Universalism in this city, who may meet with this notice, would attend and bring as many friends with him as possible. Dec 8th, 1832.

FRIENDLY LETTERS.

To the Partialist Clergy—NO. III.

Men and Brethren—I have frequently been not a little gratified with the zeal you manifest in proclaiming and defending the doctrine of an immortal existence. This is a cardinal point of the Christian system. It was a prominent feature of the apostolic ministrations of the divine testimony, and should ever be near and dear to every disciple of the Lord.

I cordially unite with you in deploring the ravages which infidelity has been making in latter years. Palsied be the hand that would snatch the staff of faith and the rod of hope from the grasp of decrepitude—that would take away the chief solace of the wasting years of the old, and sink the buoyant minds of the young into the black and stagnant waters of scepticism and total unbelief!

In an argument with the disbeliever in an immortal existence, we of course cannot adduce the evidence of revelation, for, doubting or denying the validity of the Scriptures, he would not receive their testimony. A different plan must be adopted.

In order to accomplish the object of this letter, I will suppose that you are discussing the matter of a future existence with an individual who denies the doctrine of 'life and immortality,' but acknowledges the being of a God. I will suppose you to reason with him thus:—

"You, sir, acknowledge the existence of a God. You allow that our natural thirst proves the existence of water—that our natural hunger proves the existence of food. You will not so impeach the divine character as to allege that he has implanted in us any desire simply for the purpose of mocking us. On the contrary, you allow that God has made abundant provision to gratify all the desires he has implanted in our nature. You grant the validity of this reasoning in relation to our desires for water and food. Why not extend the principle so as to embrace the gratification of our desire for a future existence, our 'longing after immortality?' Has God made provision to satisfy our desires for the things necessary for the body, and has he neglected to provide immortality for the satisfaction of our longing souls?—or, has he given us a deathless

desire for an incorruptible existence intending never to satisfy it?"

Thus, brethren, you would reason with a denier of life and immortality beyond the grave. And, whether your reasoning would or would not convince or silence him, to you and to me the argument is entirely satisfactory—especially when we remember, that the Lord "openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing."

Allow me to cite the common adage—"It is a poor rule that will not work both ways." I will reason with you from premises which we mutually acknowledge when in controversy with sceptics.

Brethren, you allow that the existence of a natural desire in man for immortality, proves the doctrine of a future life. Extend the reasoning so as to embrace the *state or condition* of man in the resurrection, and you will find yourselves standing in the broad light of Universal Salvation. You so strongly desire the truth of this doctrine as ardently to pray for it; and all your exertions to effect the conversion of sinners confirm us in the belief, that the principles at least of your desires touching this matter, are implanted in your, (I should rather say our) common nature. Has God given you those desires simply to mock you? Has he given you those desires intending never to gratify them? Surely you will not so impeach his blessed character, as to reply in the affirmative. Calling yourselves righteous, what say you to the Divine promise, that "the desire of the righteous shall be granted?" If there be any virtue, think of these things.

I will go a little farther. When we cite the declaration, "God will have all men to be saved," you reply, "it is not his will of *purpose*, but only his will of *desire*, that all should be saved." Allowing this to be the true construction of the passage, I ask, whether the being who "satisfieth the desire of every living thing," will not so arrange matters as to gratify *his own*?

A. C. T.

MINISTERIAL QUALIFICATIONS.

It is not our intention to trespass very far upon the patience of our readers in relation to this subject which of late has been so much controverted in the Messenger. We feel it our duty, however, to offer a few remarks upon the communication of Br. L. F. W. A. which appeared last week.

Br. A. makes the unqualified assertion, that every regulation of the kind of that established by the H. R. Association, "is an *assumption of power*." He adds, "we deny the right of any council of Priests to make a law, defining the qualifications of ministers of the gospel." Whether this declaration be just or not, abstractly considered, we shall be permitted to remark, that it is wholly inapplicable to the present subject. The H. R. Association is not a "council of Priests." It is composed of *two delegates* from every society in connexion with it, together with all the Universalist ministers in good standing within its boundaries. If the societies do not avail themselves of their privileges, we know not how the "Priests" are to be censured

for adopting measures in their opinion calculated to advance the interests of the cause to which they have devoted their lives. But, granting that the "Council of Priests" is a self constituted body, has it not the right of defining the qualifications of those whom it sends out as ministers of the gospel, and whom it recommends to the favor and consideration of the Universalist public? This is all the H. R. Association or its Council of Priests demands for itself. It *assumes no power* but to manage its own concerns, and is perfectly willing that every other body and individual should do the same. But apparently unsatisfied with denying the right of this Council of Priests to define the qualifications of its own members, Br. A. denies also its right to give letters of fellowship at all. "First then," says he, "let the H. R. A. show what right they have to preach the gospel, before they assume the right to give *license* to others." Now it happens that the H. R. A. assumes no right to give license. Every man, whether priest or layman, has a natural and inalienable right to give his religious fellowship to any person he pleases, and to recommend him, if he sees fit, to preach the gospel the world over. This natural right is not lost when a number of individuals associate themselves together. Having a right to give letters of fellowship and recommendation, individuals or associations have the same right to be their own judges of the qualifications of those, who ask that fellowship and recommendation. And, if there be any assumption of power in the case, it seems to us to be in Br. A., who assumes to deny the H. R. A. the right to give letters of fellowship at all, or at least denies it the right of being its own judge of the candidate's qualifications to perform the duties to which it recommends him. In one case, he unhesitatingly condemns every Association and Convention of Universalists in the United States, as being guilty of an assumption of power, for they all claim the right of giving letters of fellowship. In the other, he reduces these Associations and Conventions to mere automata, which can exercise no judgment in the matter, but are bound by a law of necessity, either to give no letters of fellowship, or else give to every one that asks them. We do not, for ourselves, view the subject in this light. Was it necessary, we might show that the right not only to give letters, but also to require qualifications, has been assumed, if assumption it be, and also acted upon by some of the most important public bodies of Universalists from their first formation. The General Association, now called the General Convention, of the N. England States, so long ago as 1803, in its *PLAN* then first adopted, specified it as a part of its business, when met, "To examine into the qualifications of ministers, preachers, or other individuals, who appear candidates for the fellowship of this Association; and to give or withhold that fellowship, as may appear best." We also have before us a resolution, adopted by the N. York State Convention at its session in Madison, 1826, couched in the following language—"Resolved, That no candidate for the ministry, shall be entitled to a letter of fellowship, from any association in this connexion, until he shall have obtained a competent know-

ledge of the common branches of English literature, and devoted, at least one year exclusively to the study of theology: unless it shall appear to the committee whose duty it shall be to examine such candidate, that he have already obtained a competent knowledge of the above sciences, and also such other qualifications as the gospel requires." We distinctly recollect a debate held by the General Convention of the New England states and others, at its session at Saratoga Springs in 1827 on this subject, the result of which was a *test*, more rigid than the above. Although the *policy* of such regulations under the existing circumstances of our denomination, has by many, been thought very questionable, the *right* of these bodies to establish them, has never before, to our knowledge at least, been denied.

Br. A. has arrived at the result to which all who embrace his leading opinions on the subject must infallibly come, that is, to a direct denial of all right in the Associations or other bodies to give letters of fellowship. For the right of every individual or every associated body to judge of the candidate's qualifications is implied in the right to give the candidate a letter of fellowship.

We will not be tedious. We commend the subject to the candid consideration of the Societies constituting the Hudson River Association, and we could wish that delegates to the next session might be instructed by their constituents how to act on this question. For ourselves, we must say that nothing has yet fallen under our observation calculated to weaken our convictions of the propriety of the measure. And so far as we are called upon to act in relation to it, we shall, in duty to ourselves and the cause in which we are engaged, act on the principle, that the Association is bound by every consideration to certify itself of a candidate's qualifications for the ministerial office, before it sends him out under its sanction. S.

A DIALOGUE.

Partialist. You cannot convince me that Universalism is the truth, so long as the Bible declares, that the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment." Do you believe that text?

Universalist. Yes. Having answered thy question, I shall proceed to show that thou art not a Christian.

P. What! prove that I am not a Christian, How?

U. By thy implied acknowledgement in the question I have just answered. Is it thy sincere opinion that endless misery is satisfactorily established by the scriptural use of the word *everlasting* in connexion with *punishment*?

P. Yes, most assuredly.

U. Can he be a christian who believes Christ was an impostor?

P. Certainly not.

U. Then, if I prove that, in thy estimation, Christ was an impostor, I prove that thou art not a Christian. Now, that Christ was an impostor, in thy estimation, is evident from the following considerations:—Thou art aware that the law dispensation was declared to be "an everlasting covenant." Consequently, by thy own showing, the Gospel is an imposition. Furthermore: thou art aware that the priesthood of Aaron was to be "an everlasting priesthood." By thy own acknowledgment, then, Christ was an impostor. Thou hast professedly received him as the high priest of thy profession, acknowledging, at the same time, thy perpetual obligation to obey the law of Moses, under the priesthood of Aaron. Consequently, thou art either a Jew at heart, or a hypocritical Pagan or Infidel—at all events, not a Christian.

P. You are severe, but your remarks certainly present the subject in a new light. How do you avoid the difficulty?

U. Plainly, by allowing, what is obviously the fact, that the word *everlasting* does not, from its own force, express an *endless* duration.

P. But our minister says that the word translated *everlasting* and applied to the *punishment* of the wicked in the passage I quoted, is, in the same verse, translated *eternal*, and applied to the *life* into which the righteous shall enter.

U. Say rather, *did* enter—for the whole of the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew had reference to events which transpired more than 1700 years ago. But I have another answer to the supposed argument of thy minister. "Eternal life" is simply the knowledge of God and of his son Jesus Christ, whenever or wherever possessed. John xvii, 3. Eternal or everlasting life, is enjoyed by the believer, in the present tense. John v, 24. But they who do not recognize in God, the Father, Friend, and Savior of all, are in the condemnation of unbelief. John iii, 18. A. C. T.

CHARACTER OF THE GOSPEL.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God—*Scripture.*

Whoever has attentively studied the spirit of the Gospel, must have been forcibly impressed with its peculiar *persuasive* character. It comes to frail, erring man in all the meekness of charity, with its message of love and entreaty. It says to the afflicted and despairing, be comforted—to the weak, be strong, and even to the *sinful*, "Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." It places mankind upon a level. It proclaims them all Brethren, and God the universal Father of all. It makes no exactions even from the vilest, save—"give me thy whole heart," in gratitude for mercies received. Love, universal love, of God to men, is its constant theme, and all it requires is the like in return—love to God and love to man. It recognizes all mankind as weak and sinful, and its great office appears to be to bring them to a sense of their frailty and dependance—to bring them back to duty.

In doing this, however, it imposes no restrictions—it draws no lines of distinction—it establishes no specific standard of excellence, to which each and every one must arrive, or forever stand condemned, but simply requires the heart service of all, according to the light that is in them. And it comes in all the power of *persuasion*, (and few will dispute the force of this principle,) exhorting us to our duty in this respect. Entreating us "by the mercies of God, to present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable in his sight." And its influence will produce a cheerful submission to the divine will—it will humble the pride of man, and place the beggar and the prince upon a level before the throne of Almighty God. Indeed, the highest attainment man can make in the study of the Gospel, is to be able to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

If such, then, is the broad and expansive spirit of the Gospel—if it knows no method of leading man back to duty and to God, other than by the "silken cord of love," how cautious should we be in circumscribing its charities, or corrupting its pure precepts, by substituting therefor the "commandments of men." If it recognizes mankind as Brethren, how much devolves upon us in removing the middle walls of partition, that the selfishness of man is constantly erecting. For we can hardly conceive of circumstances more revolting to every better feeling of the human heart, than those of contentions among brethren. Or a spirit of self-exaltation one above another. Take the family of an earthly parent. Let one exalt himself above, and attempt to "lord it" over his brother. I care not how highly gifted, or how signally blest with riches, with honors, or distinctions the one may be, or how low the other may be sunk in ignorance and poverty. Let the one *deny his kindred*, in his conduct, and the world will pro-

nounce him an enemy to his kind. Yea, even let a fallen brother come clothed in iniquity and crime, polluted as he may be, the kindred heart that would spurn him or trample him under foot, would be looked upon with feelings almost amounting to horror. What then should be the conduct of man to man, under the influence of the Gospel. The same relation is recognized and carried out, only in an infinitely extended degree.

If it exhibits all men as frail and erring, how extremely careful should we be in setting ourselves up as *standards* or *judges* over our fellows—in prescribing to them rules and regulations—in determining the nature and extent of their faith. "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not." "To his own master he standeth or falleth." "Judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way."

If it knows no language but that of *entreaty*, and breathes the heavenly accents, "come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give rest unto your souls," how can we ever exculpate ourselves for attempting to erect boundaries and land marks for its votaries—for saying to a single son or daughter of Adam, "thus far shalt thou come, and no farther!" We may entreat, we may persuade—by "the mercies of God," we may exhort our brethren to the practice of every "good word and work," but we are no where authorized to *dictate*. The religion of the gospel is a religion of *liberty*—a freedom from the commandments and requirements of men. And whenever it has been brought in contact with these commands, or rather into the embrace of worldly enactments, its beauty has ever been marred, and its glory obscured.

How imperative then, is the obligation upon each and every one of its humble professors, to use his utmost endeavors in preserving it from the palsy touch of earthly power—to advance it by the means which are alone consistent with its nature—*persuasion*. It is as free to man as the air he breathes. Its spirit is as expansive as infinity, and its charities are as lasting as eternity. "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." P.

HYPOCRISY.

Thou hypocrite! first cast the beam out of thine own eye; and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy neighbor's eye. Matt. vii, 5.

In reading Dr. Miller's Letters on Unitarianism, addressed to the Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, Md. we were struck by some remarks relative to Unitarian publications, which with a slight change will apply very well to our Presbyterian neighbors.

"From the pulpit and the press," says the Doctor, "by the formal volume and the humble pamphlet, and every variety of exhibition that ingenuity can devise, they [Unitarians] are endeavoring to make an impression upon the public mind. In every direction, and with a profusion of the most lavish kind, they are daily scattering abroad their instruments of seduction. Probably in no part of our country out of Massachusetts, do these poisoned agents so completely fill the air, or like one of the plagues of Egypt so noisomely 'come up into your houses, your chambers, and your kneading troughs,' as in Baltimore." Letters, Page 12.

Should any person hereafter wish to use appropriate language in relation to many of the publications of our Limitarian friends, Limitarians ought not to complain if Dr. Miller's is taken as the model. What could be a more striking figure than that borrowed from "one of the plagues of Egypt" to express the abundance and noisomeness of—*Tracts*, for instance? Do they not "come up into your houses, your chambers, and your kneading troughs?" To Dr. Miller,

we would say in the language of one as much better than he, as he is better than "the plague of Egypt," *Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy neighbor's eye.* S.

NICE DISTINCTIONS.

It will be recollected we quoted, under the head "the Gospel," in our last, a paragraph from the Christian Intelligencer of this City, on the *nature and design* of the Gospel, it being the introductory paragraph of an article on the subject of conveying the Gospel "to the fire-sides" of our destitute population by means of "Tracts." We expressed surprise at the time, at finding so *comprehensive* a view of the Gospel in a paper decidedly Calvinistic. But this surprise is still enhanced by finding the same article introduced into the last No. of Br. Crosby's Paper, the Baptist Repository—a paper claiming to be the most purely Calvinistic, we believe, of any extant. Br. Crosby, however exhibits rather more *caution* than our Brethren of the Intelligencer. The latter gave the article without "note or comment," but Br. C. was determined to preserve *consistency*! So when he came to the second proposition, as published in our last, viz. "*Its provisions are adapted to ALL*," he gives reference to the following comprehensive note at the bottom,

"*INTENDED for all nations.*"—ED. OF REPOSITORY."

This then divests it of all objectionable features, and perfectly adapts it to the columns of a genuine Calvinistic Journal. Verily our Brother is capable of "nice distinctions." Let us now give it its *new* reading:

"It is universally acknowledged that the gospel is intended for all---nations. Its provisions are adopted to all---nations. Its invitations are addressed to all---nations. Its benevolence embraces all---nations. It reveals the only method of salvation for all---nations. It regards as alike precious the SOULS of all---nations," &c.

Really we must award Br. C. the palm for ingenuity in *doctrinal perception*. In Matt. xxv, 32, we read "before him shall be gathered all---nations, and he shall separate them"—Who? the Nations? O no, says Br. C. he shall separate the individuals—the saint from the sinner—the elect from the non-elect. The "provisions" of the Gospel, however, are intended for "nations." But Br. C. is determined to be *consistent*—shall we say in absurdity? P.

DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE.

We are indebted to Crocker and Brewster, Boston, and Jonathan Leavitt, N. York, for a new and improved edition of "Calmet's Dictionary of the Holy Bible." The "Historical and Critical Dictionary of the Bible" by Augustus Calmet first appeared in Paris in 1728, in 4 Vols. folio. It was translated into English and published in 1732. In 1797 an edition of it was published in England under the direction of the late Mr. Charles Taylor with considerable retrenchments and additions. The retrenchments consisted, principally, in the omission of articles resting on the authority of rabbinic literature and Catholic tradition, and not directly illustrative of the Bible. The additions were given in a separate volume, under the name of *Fragments*, and consisted of discussions and illustrations of oriental life, character, and manners, drawn chiefly from travellers in the east. Several editions in England, and one in America, of the same work have been published at different times since 1800, but all in 4 or 5 quarto volumes. During the present year this unwieldy work has appeared in London under a condensed form, with the *Fragments*, so called, incorporated with the Dictionary under one alphabet, and all presented in a single royal octavo. The present American edition is from the last mentioned

English. It has been revised, with large additions, by the Rev. Edward Robinson, D. D. Professor Extraordinary of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover, and is illustrated with maps, and engravings on wood. It forms a super-royal volume of 1000 pages and is afforded in boards at \$4 50.

On the value of this work it is unnecessary for us to speak. In its present form it is a treasure-house of information unencumbered with the mass of useless matter which has only enhanced the size and price of preceding editions, without increasing the value. The labors of Professor Robinson have very much enriched its columns by bringing to the subject his varied and extensive learning. "Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible" is now within the reach of every clergyman and of almost every layman, and will we are persuaded be found a very great help to a just and ready understanding of the Sacred Scriptures. S.

EXCHANGE PAPERS.

We have experienced some irregularity in the receipt of some of our exchange papers. The following is a list of missing Nos. which our brethren will be kind enough to furnish us if convenient, viz. Gospel Anchor, 2d vol. Nos. 5, 6, 14, 20, 22 and 23; Universalist, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 8, 13, 19, 22, 24 and 26; Religious Inquirer, Vol. II, Nos. 3, 7, 17 and 18; Magazine and Advocate, Vol. 3, (new series) Nos. 18 and 24. Christian Pilot, Nos. 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20. And we have only received No. 1, Vol. 2, Southern Pioneer, and Nos. 1, 2, and 3 of the Herald of Truth.

MOTTOS.

Br. Spear, of the Hartford Inquirer, has some very pleasant remarks on the subject of "Mottos" to Periodicals, from which we extract the following:

"On looking at the Christian Secretary, we find the following motto: 'What thou seest, write—and send unto the Churches.' Now the Editor of this paper *sees* liberal principles prevailing, but he does not write and send unto the Churches. The other day we requested to be heard through his columns in reply to a piece in his paper on 'Eternal Death.' He must have *seen* the note we sent to him; but we find he does not 'send unto the Churches.' In fine he does not mean to let the Churches know there are any replies to the slanders which are constantly issuing from the Secretary. We would advise him to alter his motto something like this, 'what thou seest—hide from the Churches.'"

SENTINEL AND STAR.

This paper, (devoted to the doctrine of Universalism,) which has been published for three years past at Cincinnati, Ohio, is now removed to Philomath, Union Co. Indiana, the seat of the Western Union Seminary.

SUBLIMITY.

A friend, says the Hartford Religious Inquirer, has handed us the following, expressed by a young convert not a hundred miles from this city. He addressed his hearers in the following sublime and exalted strain; doubtless intending to give them some idea of *hell*.

'Fellow travellers to the hill of Zion! Supposing this round world was one solid flat rock and that this rock was heated to such a degree as to melt bars of iron ten miles off, then what would you do my friends?'

We can tell him what they would do: if they were free agents they would not endure it!

CONVERSION.

Elder J. Boody, of the Free Will Baptist, or Christian order, (says the Trumpet) is now engaged in preaching the glad tidings of a world's

salvation, to attentive assemblies in the towns of New Durham, Middleton and Wakefield.

A Meeting-house erected by the Universalists in New Rowley, Mass. was dedicated on Wednesday, 21st ult.

DIED.

In Norwich 15th inst. Mr. Elihu P. Smith, aged 43 years. Mr. S. has long been known as a zealous and firm believer in the doctrine of impartial grace. He was not only a believer in the doctrine, but his life corresponded to the excellency and sublimity of his faith. He had a short but distressing illness, which he endured with great fortitude, adding another testimony to the many that have been offered to the world that Universalism will sustain the soul in the hour of distress. He died as he had lived, rejoicing in the hope of a world's salvation.—*Religious Inquirer*.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES.

Received at this Office, ending Dec. 5th.

P. M. Huntington, L. I. 2d Vol. \$2; P. M. Pittsfield; P. M. Shesequin for N. F. Athens, and N. H. Rome, 2d Vol. each \$1; S. C. H. Middle-Island, \$2; P. M. Pendleton, 2d Vol. \$2; P. M. Bristol; A. C. T. Philadelphia; S. V. Morristown, 2d Vol. \$2; E. K. Dresden Mills, 2d Vol. \$2; N. P. Williamsburgh, 1st Vol. \$2; P. M. Waterbury.

RELIGIOUS NOTICE.

Br. S. J. Hillyer will preach at Somers, Sunday, Dec. 9; at Peekskill, Monday evening Dec. 10.

SACRED MUSIC.

An Association, for improvement in Sacred Music, has recently been formed, and holds its meetings in the Lecture Room of the Orchard-street Church. The Society has a Teacher engaged, and meets every Thursday evening, for practice. Persons desirous of commencing with the first rudiments of Music, can have an opportunity by an early connection with the Society. It is earnestly hoped the young, both Ladies and Gentlemen, connected with the congregation worshipping in that Church, will improve this opportunity for instruction. For information in relation to the Association, application may be made to Mr. S. Crowell, 33 Chatham-street, Mr. E. Chapin, 303 Division-street, Mr. E. Benjamin, 46 Oliver-street, Mr. W. Trembley, 343 Grand-street, and at this office. Dec. 8, 1832.

DORCAS SOCIETY.

Donations in money, dry goods, or cast off clothing will be gratefully received for this Society by Mrs. Durell, No. 27 Roosevelt-street, Mrs. Hammond, No. 418 Grand-street, and at this office. Those having the means and willing to aid in relieving the distresses of the poor during the approaching winter, may thus enjoy the opportunity with little inconvenience to themselves and with the certainty of their donations being well applied.

DEAN'S LECTURES.

Just published, Ten Lectures in defence of the final restoration of all men to holiness and happiness, by Rev Paul Dean, of Boston. The course consists of ten lectures—arranged in the following order:

In Lecture I, the question to be discussed is stated, accompanied with suitable remarks on its importance. In Lecture II, the objection to the final restoration on the ground of election, is examined and answered. Lecture III, is devoted to examining the conditions or terms of salvation. Lecture IV, considers the duration of punishment. Lecture V, examines the objection to the final restoration on the ground of its licentious tendency. Lecture VI, is devoted to presenting the proofs of the final restoration drawn from the character and attributes of Deity. Lecture VII, presents proofs of the final restoration drawn from the mission, works, and death of Christ. Lecture VIII, presents proofs of the final restoration, drawn from the plain promises of God. Lecture IX presents proofs of the final restoration drawn from the nature and tendency of christian morality. Lecture X, exhibits proofs of the final restoration drawn from the nature of man, and the scriptural descriptions of future happiness.

Just received and for sale at this office. Price 87 1-2 cents. Dec. 3, 1832.

BY REQUEST.

WHAT A SERMON SHOULD BE.

It should be brief; if lengthy, it will steep
Our hearts in apathy, our eyes in sleep;
The dull will yawn, the chapel lounge dose,
Attention flag, and memory's portals close.

It should be warm; a living altar coal,
To melt the icy heart and charm the soul;
A sapless, dull harangue, however read,
Will never rouse the soul, nor raise the dead.

It should be simple, practical, and clear;
No fine-spun theory to please the ear;
No curious lay to tickle lettered pride,
And leave the poor and plain unquiesced.

It should be tender and affectionate,
As his warm theme who wept lost Salem's fate;
The fiery lay with words of love allayed,
Will sweetly warn, and awfully persuade.

It should be manly, just, and rational;
Wisely conceived, and well expressed withal;
Not stuffed with silly notions, apt to stain
A sacred desk, and show a muddy brain.

It should possess a well adapted grace,
To situation, audience, and place;
A sermon formed for scholars, statesmen, lords,
With peasants and mechanics ill accords.

It should with evangelic beauties bloom.
Like Paul's at Corinth, Athens, or at Rome;
Let some Epictetus or Sterne esteem!
A bleeding Jesus is the gospel theme!

It should be mixed with many an ardent prayer,
To reach the heart, and fix and fasten there;
When God and man are mutually addressed,
God grants a blessing, man is truly blest.

It should be closely, well applied at last,
To make the moral nail securely fast;
Thou art the man, and thou alone wilt make
A Felix tremble, and a David quake!

THE MOTHER.

A custom prevailed at Valehead, and through its neighborhood, which ever appeared to me very beautiful and affecting. If, in the dusk of the Easter Eve, your way happened to lie through churchyard, you would have perceived figures, each equipped with a lantern and a basket, flitting from spot to spot through the gloom. If a stranger, you would most probably take them for the wives of the fishermen, procuring worms, and so pass on without further consideration. But the morning would reveal to you a very different employment. You would see every grave, whose tenant had one unforgetful heart still left above ground, profusely decked with the choicest flowers of this most interesting of seasons. The whole churchyard puts a holiday smile over its mouldering surface, and every chaplet-strewn mound seems to invite you to admiration, and in a note of triumph to cry out for its owner, "We are not nothing. We still exist, and shall rise again, even as our Lord upon this day arose again."

On the Easter day first ensuing after my friend's arrival in the country, I observed a grave thus dressed, which, ever since I had known the place, had hitherto lain in melancholy neglect, most piteously contrasted with its gaily drest neighbors. Upon inquiry, I learned that the grave contained the mother of a sailor, who, after an absence of many years, had but a few days ago returned to the place of his birth. I pointed it out to my friend, who, after regarding it for some time with a musing look, and then throwing a hasty glance at the chancel, where the family vault lay, took my arm, and, according to custom, accompanied me for the length of two or three fields on my way homewards. I confess that I had a design in thus directing his attention. Hitherto, in his conversations with me, he had dwelled almost exclusively upon the part which

his father assumed in the government of his household. I was curious to elicit from him something respecting the part assigned to the mother, and had now, methought, laid a successful train; nor was I disappointed.

He began, however, as usual, with remarks upon the service of the day. I have always been struck, said he, alluding to the Gospel for the day, with the part which women bear in the history of our Lord's sojourn upon earth. We find a faithful little troop of them clinging round him to the last, even when men had lost all courage, and forsaken him. They attend at his cross, they wait upon his sepulchre, and they are accordingly honored with being made the first witnesses of the resurrection. It seems as if all had been designed to enforce the sense of the completeness of our restoration, since woman, who first sinned and incurred death, was thus first presented with the visible palpable pledge of everlasting life; and it is observable that wherever the Gospel is maintained in its purity, there woman is in full enjoyment of all her native rights and dignity. Hence it is, that the Christian alone, at least in my view, possesses a home,* and our Savior, in the course of effecting our eternal happiness, has established for us the greatest of earthly blessings. For without a mother maintained in due honor, upheld in all her dignity, invested with her sway, home cannot exist.

In this blessed covenant, then, [the covenant of grace] which we enjoy, the mother has been restored to all her legitimate sovereignty, and great and incalculable in her influence. Like some fine concentrated perfume, it penetrates with potent, but invisible agency, every nook of home, pervading where the coarser authority of the father could never reach, it begins with the first breath we draw, with the first light we see. On her were fixed our first affections, from her we received our first food, on her lap spoke the first words, thought the first thought, read the first letter, add, with our hands clasped in hers, offered our first prayer. In all that we hereafter think or know, we are immediately referred to her who furnished us with their elements. Under her rule it was, that we enjoyed what now appears to have been the only period of unalloyed happiness, and from underneath her warm and sheltering wing were taken to the first taste of anxiety and toil, and transferred to the comparatively stern control of the father, or still sterner discipline of the school. Nor ceases even her direct influence then; it revives at intervals in all its original freshness and strength of hold; often, after the lapse of many maturing years, when sickness makes us children again, in her we seek a refuge, once more experience her unwearied attention, and pain is deprived of half its sting by the renewal of that nursing care to which, as bliss for ever gone by, our memory has so often and so fondly reverted. * * *

The mother's place can never be supplied: none other can obtain that entire intimacy with our hearts; in her loss, the father feels at once a link broken between him and his children; she forms the softening medium between his masculine control, and their tender years. The father may instruct, but the mother must instil: the father may command our reason, but the mother compels our instinct; the father may finish, but the mother must begin. In a word, were I to draw a general distinction, without particular attention to accuracy, I should say that the empire of the father was over the head; of the mother over the heart.—*Rectory of Valehead.*

* Acts xii. 12.

EDUCATION

Creates a just standard of moral character in a Village.

In such a village no haughty and purse-proud aristocracy will ever lord it over a virtuous, but

poor democracy. Each inhabitant will stand or fall, accordingly as his moral and intellectual, but not as his natural and bodily endowments shall be appreciated.

In heathen lands, where ignorance envelops the mind in worse than Egyptian darkness, and nothing but the body is attended to, men are estimated by the strength of the muscular powers, and the height of their worldly goods. In a christian and civilized place, the distinctions of nature and art are lost in the loveliness of moral worth. It will not do for a man there to plead as a reason for his advancement, merely that he has the strength of a Hercules, or the riches of Croesus. He must display a higher passport to the esteem of his fellow citizens. He must show that he has the mind of a scholar and a christian;—that his influence is the result of moral and intellectual worth, not of bodily strength and external splendor. For the inhabitants will know enough to look at mind and not at matter in their estimation of men. The first question they will desire to settle concerning any candidate for their confidence, or their esteem, or their assistance, will not be—*is he rich?*—or *is he mighty?*—But *is he good?*

It was this simple but mighty power, of a moral and religious education which in our own country, gathered together, in the year 1774, a body of men concerning whom one of the most eminent English statesmen—I allude to the Earl of Chatham—said;—"For myself, I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation, and it has been my favorite study;—I have read Thucydides and have studied and admired the master spirits of the world—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation, or body of men can stand in preference to the General Congress of Philadelphia.

*Prospectus for the Second Volume of the***CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,**

Devoted to the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence, the defence of Liberal Principles, generally, in Religion, and miscellaneous reading, of chaste and moral tendency.

The first Volume of the Messenger, closed on the 27th ult. The Second commenced Nov. 3d.

In presenting proposals for the 2d Vol. few observations will be necessary in explanation of its objects, and those few cannot, perhaps, be better expressed than in the language of the prospectus for the first volume. "Its primary design is to 'plead the cause' of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians, (the Universalists)—to illustrate and enforce their principles, and defend firmly, though as far as possible, with christian candor, their doctrine from the opprobrium which even professing christians endeavor, too readily, to fasten upon it; and in thus defending its own, it will advocate the civil and religious rights of all. Professing a sentiment which recognizes the Almighty as our common Father, and mankind as brethren indeed, it can know no exclusive privileges. Whatever it may ask for itself, it asks for ALL."

TERMS.—The Messenger is published every Saturday, at 85 1-2 Bowery, on a royal sheet, quarto form, close print, at *Two Dollars* per annum, in advance, or *Two Dollars and Fifty Cents* if not paid within six months from time of subscribing. Letters to be addressed, post paid, "P. Price, 85 1-2 Bowery, New-York."

P. PRICE, PUBLISHER.

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